

AUTO NEWS
DETAILING

VOL. 7, NO. 4 WINTER 2022

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All inquiries should be directed to:
 Auto Detailing News
 110 Childs Ln. Franklin, TN 37067
jacksonv@autodetailingnews.com

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Of course I am proud of every issue of Auto Detailing News,

but this one holds a special place in my heart. First of all, it has a page dedicated to Chris Evans and Daryl Lyons, two industry icons who left us way too soon. If I had the room in this magazine, I would dedicate an entire issue to their contributions. And, also, there is the cover story, written beautifully by my good friend Prentice St. Clair. His article perfectly blends both detailing terms and his own poignant relationship to a particular job. You'll have to read it to find out what I am talking about, but Prentice, you have outdone yourself and I am truly grateful.

This year started off with a 'bang' thanks to the always fun and enjoyable Mobile Tech Expo. I would like to thank everyone who stopped by our booth to sign up for a subscription, renew a subscription or to just say 'hello.' And, i would like to give an even larger thank you to the organizers. I can only imagine the countless hours you put into the Expo, especially Steve "Wheels" Bucaro, who makes sure everyone is having a good and worthy experience.

And, one more thing before I go... I wanted to use this section to list upcoming events for detailers (we got so many good photos for the Industry Dirt section, I couldn't add the calendar in there!).

Until next time,

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

JUNE 2-3, 2023

**Southern Detailer's Conference
 Kentucky International**
 Convention Center | Louisville, Kentucky

MAY 8-10, 2023

2023 ICA Car Wash Show
 Las Vegas Convention Center

SEPT 21 & 22, 2023

Carwash Show Europe
 EXPO Greater Amsterdam
 The Netherlands

OCT 2-4, 2023

**Northeast Regional Carwash
 Association**
 Atlantic City Convention Center

OCT 21-NOV 3, 2023

SEMA Show
 Las Vegas Convention Center

FEB 1-4, 2024

Mobile Tech Expo 2024
 Gaylord Palms Resort | Orlando, Florida

Looking for help?

Consider a person with disabilities...

According to the Small Business Administration (SBA), now more than ever, small businesses are finding it challenging to hire talented workers. Hiring disabled individuals can help businesses meet their talent needs while strengthening their competitive edge. By hiring individuals with disabilities, businesses can:

- Expand their pool of talent
- Create a culture of diversity
- Meet their workforce needs
- Foster creative business solutions
- Generate goodwill among customers

A disability is considered a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activity. Individuals with disabilities often need workplace accommodations—a modification or adjustment to a job, the work environment, or the way things are usually done during the hiring process.

Small businesses benefit when they value and appreciate each person for their individual differences and experiences. By investing in recruiting, hiring, and retaining talent—including people with disabilities—businesses can give themselves a competitive edge and demonstrate their commitment to inclusion.

The goal of the recruitment process is to attract and identify individuals who have the best mix of skills and attributes for the job available. Ensuring that all qualified individuals—including those with disabilities—can take part in the process is essential to achieving this goal. It is important to know where to look to find candidates with disabilities beyond the traditional recruiting processes. Companies interested in hiring employees with disabilities should begin by:

- Reaching out to the local Workforce Development Board (WDB). WDBs

are part of the Public Workforce System, a network of federal, state, and local offices that connect companies to the resources they need to strengthen their business and their workforce, including skilled employees with disabilities.

- Connecting with a Business Services Representative at a local American Job Center. They provide assistance with recruiting, hiring or training employees, including people with disabilities who are ready and willing to work.
- EARN offers a list of online job posting boards that can help small businesses find qualified workers with disabilities.

Financial incentives

The following Financial incentives encourage businesses to hire individuals with disabilities and offset the costs of workplace accommodations.

Federal tax incentives

The main federal tax incentives are:

- The Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC), available for hiring individuals from certain groups who have consistently faced significant barriers to employment.
- The Barrier Removal Deduction, whereby businesses can deduct up to \$15,000 for making a facility or public transportation vehicle more accessible.
- The Disabled Access Credit, a non-refundable credit for small businesses that incur expenditures for the purpose of providing access to persons with disabilities.

State tax incentives

There are also state tax credits for employers who hire people with disabilities. Check your state office of tax and revenue for more details.



I can deduct what???

Doing taxes. Ugh. It can cause an overwhelming sensation, with numbers, additions, subtractions, receipts, records and dollar signs floating in the undertone. But, one thing that can be somewhat pleasant is going over all of your tax deductions and realizing they will all be worth it. Sure, you can take the standard deduction, which according to QuickBooks, is faster, but you can ultimately miss out on some opportunities to save money. “Itemizing your deductions takes time and requires well-kept records, but it’s the best way to take full advantage of small business tax deductions.”

So, let’s get to the good stuff. The following are expenses you might not have known are tax deductible. If you did,

good for you. If not, keep reading...

The following are deductible:

- Professional magazines
- In-flight internet purchases during business travel
- A portion of homeowners’ insurance if you have a home office
- Vandalism done to the building
- ATM withdrawals (if cash is used for the business)
- Food purchased for stray cats (if they help with pest control)
- Books related to your industry
- Gym membership (if a doctor prescribes one for health reasons)
- Any kind of protective clothing such as safety boots or masks or work gloves.

Also, did you know?

The IRS has a site dedicated to small business owners. It offers everything from what forms are needed, to workshops and everything in between. You can find it at: <https://www.irs.gov/businesses/small-businesses-self-employed>

What’s new for 2023?

The Internal Revenue Service announced that beginning on January 1, 2023, the standard mileage rates for the use of a car (also vans, pickups or panel trucks) will be:

- 65.5 cents per mile driven for business use, up 3 cents from the midyear increase setting the rate for the second half of 2022.
- 22 cents per mile driven for medical or moving purposes for qualified active-duty members of the Armed Forces, consistent with the increased midyear rate set for the second half of 2022.
- 14 cents per mile driven in service of charitable organizations; the rate is set by statute and remains unchanged from 2022.

These rates apply to electric and hybrid-electric automobiles, as well as gasoline and diesel-powered vehicles.

The standard mileage rate for business use is based on an annual study of

the fixed and variable costs of operating an automobile. The rate for medical and moving purposes is based on the variable costs.

It is important to note that under the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, taxpayers cannot claim a miscellaneous itemized deduction for unreimbursed employee travel expenses.

Taxpayers always have the option of calculating the actual costs of using their vehicle rather than using the standard mileage rates.

Taxpayers can use the standard mileage rate but generally must opt to use it in the first year the car is available for business use. Then, in later years, they can choose either the standard mileage rate or actual expenses. Leased vehicles must use the standard mileage rate method for the entire lease period (including renewals) if the standard mileage rate is chosen.

Celebrating



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Do you have a flying dog?

Successful business owners have “dogs,” or better yet, a “pack of dogs” biting their hands



CHUCK VIOLAND founded Violand Management Associates in 1987. VMA is a leader in executive development, management training, and business performance maximization for entrepreneurial restoration and cleaning companies. As an author and popular speaker, Violand is a respected authority on entrepreneurial small businesses, having spent more than 30 years as both a business consultant and an executive coach. He is a regular contributor to trade journals and newsletters and is the author of the popular weekly leadership series Monday Morning Notes.

by Chuck Violand

Entrepreneurs can be their own worst enemy. Despite our best intentions and the dreams we have of building business empires, many of us continually shoot ourselves in our own feet ... with our own gun!

As a result, our businesses and the people we employ suffer. Sometimes, what we need most isn't more sales or more cash or better detailing systems. Sometimes, what we need is someone or something to take the gun out of our hands to keep us from hurting ourselves!

Fortunately, there's help on the way, and it comes in the form of a story from the airline industry.

As the story goes, there was a passenger boarding a plane (pre-COVID) who looked through the open door to the flight deck and noticed that the only occupants were a pilot and a dog.

Curious about this, he turned to the flight attendant who was greeting the

boarding passengers and asked, "What's up with the dog on the flight deck?"

The attendant explained that autopilot technology had advanced to the point where planes actually fly much smoother and have a much better safety record when pilots don't handle the controls but, instead, let the autopilot fly the plane.

She added, "But, pilots are only human and have a high need to control their environment, so most of them find it impossible to keep their hands off the controls. Our airline devised a creative way to address this problem."

She went on to explain, "FAA regulations require that all aircraft have a pilot on board at all times. The dog is also highly trained and is there to bite the pilot's hand if he tries to touch any of the controls."

"So, why have the pilot there at all?" the passenger asked.

"He's there to feed the dog," she replied.

What does this mean and how does

it apply to detail shop owners? you might be asking. To put it simply: Successful business owners have "dogs" on their own "flight decks."

In business, these dogs are known as managers, advisors, and spouses to name just a few. Just as with the airplanes in our story, these owners know their business performs better and they are a much better business leader when they actually listen to them.

The best dogs are able to take the self-destructive gun out of our hands and then have us show them gratitude for doing so. They keep us from hurting ourselves and our business by repeatedly shooting ourselves in the foot. Some of us (this author included!) may require more than one dog to keep us in line.

Outsiders are frequently in better positions than the owner to recognize when they would benefit from the presence of a dog. They can more easily observe the limitations placed on the business by the owner's behavior and

the decisions they make.

Countless books have been written on the importance of building strong management teams in growing businesses. These teams are just another term for the pack of dogs an owner needs to help them stay on course and grow their company.

The question that begs asking is why more business owners don't hire (and listen) to them.

START 'HERE' WHEN HIRING

The first hire a business owner makes is oftentimes the trusted office manager/bookkeeper. Or at least it should be. This is one dog only a handful of 'pilots' can do without. Yet many owners resist bringing this person on board, and despite all their pleading to the contrary, it's usually not because they can't afford them. In fact, most businesses can't afford not to hire them.

While many of us won't say it out loud, one of the strongest underlying reasons we delay this hiring is because of trust. Or more accurately, a lack of trust. This is an issue that goes deep with business owners and could honestly fill the pages of several articles.

Some owners dupe themselves into thinking that if they manage the books themselves, they'll suddenly discover a level of personal organization and detail that has eluded them until now (which is highly unlikely).

My experience has shown that when tracking a company's financial performance over time, you can almost see the date when the owner finally hired the right person to manage the office and the books. The company's performance almost always visibly improves. Most important of all is that this person has the skills to manage the owner!

This is a dog who knows when and how to bite the owner's hand when needed.

The whole scenario about making the right hire to manage the office and the books doesn't end with this one position. It will repeat itself over and over

in other positions as the company continues to grow. The need for additional dogs, sometimes with advanced skills, will continue.

LET DOWN THOSE GUARDS

Another reason some owners resist bringing talented people on board is because they're afraid those people will be smarter or better liked than they are. They also fear losing control of the company or having their authority undermined. After all, it's not often that professional detailers get petted on the head and told what a great job they're doing.

These justifications seem rational in the mind of the business owner, yet they place a significant constraint on the growth of the company, which is something most owners don't see.

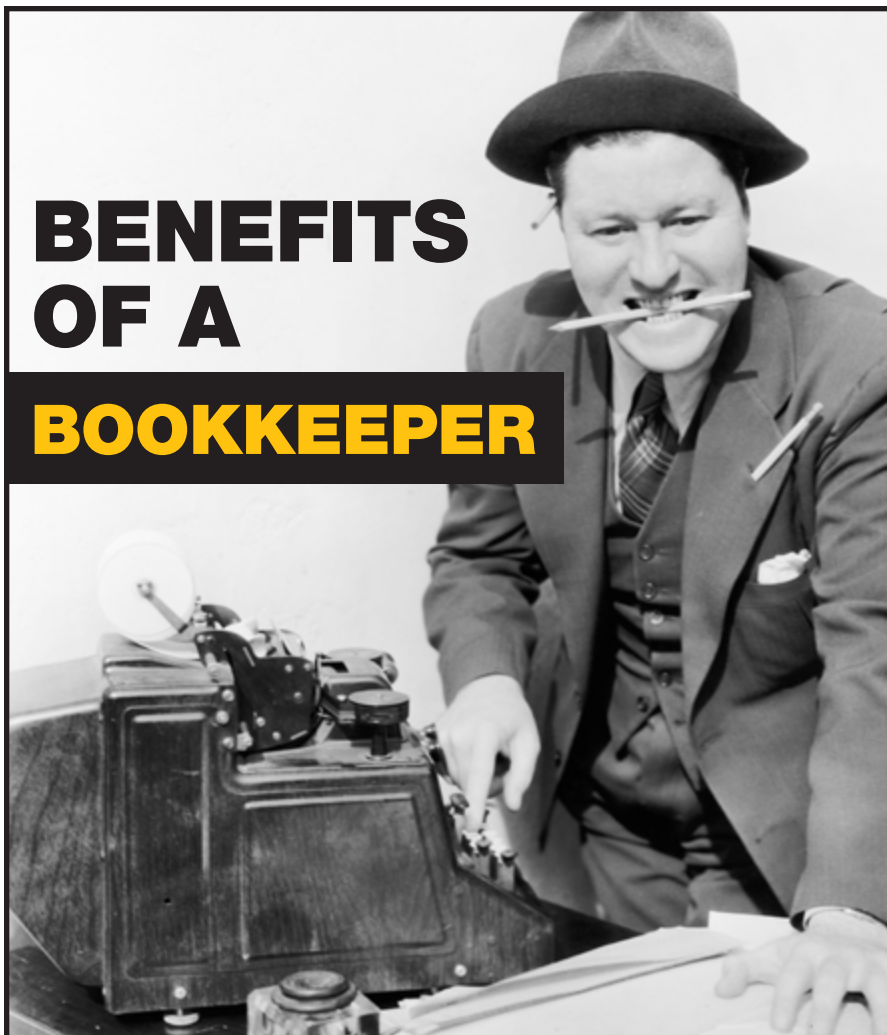
Oftentimes business owners are so busy doing meticulous detail work and dealing with customers that they are unaware of the changes taking place in the markets they serve and within their own industry that can have disastrous effects on their business if they're not recognized and addressed. A good dog can sense things an owner simply can't. They have heightened sensitivities and a greater awareness of things within their own areas of expertise. No owner can be expected to have all these insights.

I'll even make a case that the best business pilots are the ones who've surrounded themselves with a pack of dogs. And not all these dogs have the title of manager or have an advanced degree as part of their pedigree.

Having bite marks on their hands or receiving an occasional growl might make an owner think their dogs don't appreciate them, but the opposite is usually the case. In fact, I believe these are indicators of the best dogs. They may cause pain in the short term, but they pay huge dividends in the long run.

And it's the best owners who have learned that a rolled-up newspaper isn't the right response to feedback. It's better to get out the treats.

BENEFITS OF A BOOKKEEPER



According to the small business advice company, *Don't Do It Yourself*, there are various benefits to hiring a bookkeeper.

Money Savings

"Having accurate records helps reduce errors which could result in costly fines from government agencies due to incorrect filings or noncompliance with regulations related to taxes or other areas such as payroll deductions or employee benefits plans, etc. This means more money saved over time!" states the January 23, 2023 DDIY article, *Why Hire a Bookkeeper?*

Avoiding Liabilities

"Hiring a qualified bookkeeper provides businesses with numerous advantages. These include increased accuracy in record keeping, timely reporting

on financial performance indicators such as cash flow management, compliance with tax laws and regulations which reduces potential liabilities and penalties associated with non-compliance, and freeing up internal resources to focus on core activities while saving costs at the same time," the DDIY article states.

Time Savings

And lets not forget the freeing-up of time that could be spent on vehicle. According to DDIY, "Bookkeepers free up valuable time for other tasks by taking on the tedious job of record keeping and data entry as well as preparing reports such as income statements or balance sheets, so you don't have to do it yourself or hire additional staff members to handle these duties."

Honoring Chris Evans and Daryl Lyons and the legacies they left behind

The bright light that has been shining down on the entire detailing industry dimmed on two separate occasions with the passing of Chris Evans and Daryl Lyons in 2022. The light had become so bright thanks to their contributions, making it all the more sad that such beacons of clemency and resolve were no longer here on earth. The passing of Rick Goldstein in 2021 was enough to leave an immeasurable hole in the tapestry of detailing icons and accomplishments. We cannot lose anyone else, were the words uttered by those in the industry, who probably would say that they were more like friends than colleagues. It was a plea that unfortunately was not honored. With the losses of Evans and Lyons, we also lost their charm, charisma and enthusiasm for the industry, and we can only now revel in the legacies they left behind, and hope they both knew, or “know” for those who believe, that their contributions and friendliness will never be forgotten.

Both the Detailers Dictionary and the Southern Detailer’s Conference are both lighthouses in the sea of detailing monomania. Ray Bradbury sums it up nicely in his book *Fahrenheit 451*, on how people can leave behind great legacies:

“Everyone must leave something behind when he dies, my grandfather said. A child or a book or a painting or a house or a wall built or a pair of shoes made. Or a garden planted. Something your hand touched some way so your soul has somewhere to go when you die, and when people look at that tree or that flower you planted, you’re there.”

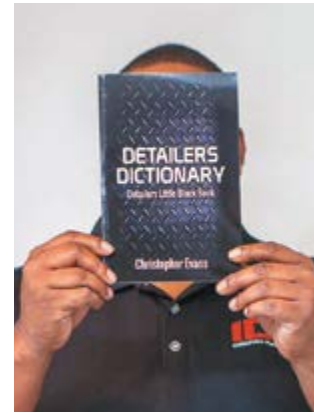
Both Chris and Daryl planted seeds that will never be forgotten.

Chris Evans

The *Detailers Dictionary* was something Chris Evans promoted with great exuberance. He wasn’t just an author looking to make money, he was a pioneer, a virtuoso, and a modest zealot, hoping to provide a useful tool for others. With that in mind, he worked tirelessly on *Detailers Dictionary* and the book became a success. In fact, it was so successful, Chris decided to write a Volume 2. “This is my small way of helping to move the industry forward,” Chris told me a few years ago.

International Detail Trainer Bob Wrasman, who was mentioned in Chris’s obituary as his adoptive father, recently said of his passing, “Chris would help me with training at some of the biggest and best museums in the world and it was on his own dime. He felt like a son to me and I will never forget that! We would stay up and talk about training shows and ideas to help lift the industry. He would ask me about his book and what he should put in it or take out. I miss him so much... He had a way to light up the room!”

Today, Wrasman is hard at work setting up a scholarship



in Chris’s name. “At the recent Mobile Tech Expo a fundraiser was held and we collected over \$3,000 to start the Chris Evans Foundation. Chris always wanted to help troubled youth in Chicago by teaching them about detailing and to get them back in the workforce.”

Chris, who was a devoted husband and father, was only 47 at the time of his passing. To honor his family, and to keep his memory alive, we as an industry can help by buying and supporting his books, both of which can be found here: detailersdictionary.com. And, we can help by honoring this request of his, which he told me back in 2021: I will continue training, educating and consulting... but to see detailers be acknowledged and respected by society would be a dream come true.”

Daryl Lyons

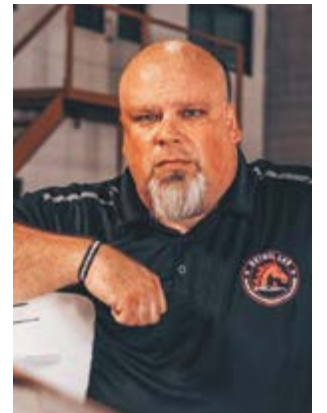
It was no surprise that the first-ever Southern Detailer’s Conference, held in 2019 in Kentucky, was a big success. Everything Daryl did was big. From his personality, to his ideas, to his friendships, to his support of others. Even his nickname was “Big D.” After the Conference’s first success, momentum grew and so did the show. It soon became a staple in detailers’ calendars and that meant a lot to him.

“We designed the event to allow the attendees more direct access to meet and discuss ideas and products with some of the most knowledgeable detailers in our industry. We provided an environment which promoted hands-on learning opportunities taught by the best of the best. ...In these 2 days, we experienced an atmosphere of camaraderie that makes our industry better and stronger.”

Daryl was also a big promoter of positive thinking. The statement he posted for his Facebook page reads: You are stronger than you think, no one completes you but you! Always look for the good....

Another way to “sum up” Daryl is to read the following post by Kelly Jones via social media:

I am so heartbroken to hear that my dear friend and huge supporter in the detailing industry has passed away. "Big D" Daryl Lyons was a pillar in the industry and always had the kindest words of encouragement for me. I'll never forget the day I was presented with the Female



Detailer of the Year Award and how genuinely happy he was for me to receive it and the many conversations we had about this award he was so passionate about. He was so proud to have created the [Southern Detailer’s Conference] -one of my favorite events. He truly wanted to elevate the industry and give recognition where it was deserved...

And then there’s Shawn Rowan’s Facebook comment:

I truly feel that I am a better person because of meeting Daryl and talking to him about our industry. I really don’t know too many other people who were like Daryl and so committed to making our industry more recognized professionally, especially with his free mentoring of the younger detailers!

Godspeed Daryl, I'll see you on the other side

One way to honor Daryl’s legacy is to promote and attend The Southern Detailer’s Conference. The next one is being held June 2-3 in Louisville, Kentucky.



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11-year-old detailing prodigy passes all certification exams



If anyone out there is grappling with feeling old, do not read any further because this next story is about an amazing detailer... who was born in the 2020s! Rigo Santana, a Master-certified member of the official SONAX Detailing Team and owner of Laguna Hills' Xtreme Xcellence, of Laguna Hills, California, spent a week in February dual-certifying an 11-year-old child detailing prodigy, Steven Thompson III. Thompson, who still has to wait five years until he can get a driver's license, is now a certified as Skills Validated member of the International Detailing Association (IDA) and a certified member of Santana's NewGen of Detailers.

With those two certifications – the SV being the highest level of certification offered by the IDA – STEV3 as he is known on social media, Thompson is now the youngest officially-certified professional detailer.

Santana has been so impressed by the pint-sized detailer's acumen for detailing, he has launched a "Kid's" version of his NewGen of Detailers network with hopes of encouraging more young peo-

ple to learn the skills early and learn them correctly so they can succeed in the detailing business.

Thompson, who is from Boise, Idaho, earned his IDA certification during the Mobile Tech Expo in Orlando, Florida in February, where he received a standing ovation during the IDA dinner and awards ceremony. It was there that he caught the attention of Santana. The young detailing phenomenon is was then invited to Los Angeles where he was tested for the IDA's highest level of certification - Skills Validated (SV). The SV training is an on-the-spot, one-on-one teacher-to-student session testing him on the concepts in the written test he passed (CD) a few weeks ago.

Thompson has shown a passion for cars ever since he was three years old, watching the General Lee fly through the air on the TV show, Dukes of Hazzard. His dad, Steve Thompson II, a successful and multi-certified detailer and owner of Boise's Detail Doctors, eventually asked his son if he wanted to learn the trade. "Do you want to be a detailer?" he simply asked his son. The answer, of course,

was 'yes.' "Nowadays... anyone can go to a store and buy some DIY equipment and chemicals, watch a few videos online and then proclaim themselves to be the best detailer in their community," his father said. "So, I told him if he wanted to be taken seriously, he should join the IDA and get the CD certification." Thompson said his son accepted the challenge and went to work studying every resource he could find and even asked his mom to help him make flash cards. For almost six months, he studied before and after school and a little on the weekends. He passed the CD certification, missing only six questions out of 100. "The SV is significantly harder than the written test," said Thompson. "I know because I took them both. But his son passed with flying colors. Steve II swears that his son's first car will be the 1969 Dodge Charger from the Dukes of Hazzard. "I know you're thinking that is quite a goal for a kid of 11, but when this kid sets a goal - especially if it has anything to do with cars - he is pretty determined."

Detailer leads Preservation Project Team to Petersen Automotive Museum

In other Rigo Santana news, he also led a team of eight detailers, to Los Angeles for a one-of-kind project. The detailers, all trained by Santana's New Generation of Detailers network, were brought to the Petersen Automotive Museum back in February for a big museum preservation project.

For two days, between February 26 and 27, the team was tasked with cleaning and prepping six class vehicles, including a 2001 Ferrari 550 Barchetta; a modern replica of the "Slow Burn" 1936 Auburn 852 Boattail Speedster; a 1956 Jaguar XKSS; a 1964 Porsche 901 Coupe; and a 1967 Ford GT40 Mark III.

The Petersen team this year includes Mario Carrasco of Hugo's Auto Detail in Oxnard, California; Mauricio Hernandez of Xelent Auto Detailing in Orange, California; Luis German Arce Palomera of Supreme Pro Detailing in Lincoln City,



Oregon; Adolfo Collado of Specialized Pro Detail in Dinuba, California; Oscar Santos of Oscar Pro Auto Detailing in Bellevue, Washington; and Carlos Xazares or Cayro Mobile Detail in Chiller, Ariz.; Katherine Mayo of UM Distributors in Trujillo Alto,

Puerto Rico; and Steven Thompson III of Boise, Idaho.

The 2001 Ferrari 550 Barchetta is a modern interpretation of the 1947 Ferrari 212 Barchetta, which is Italian for "little boat".

The "Slow Burn" is a custom build that began as an official Glen Pray fiberglass-bodied recreation of a 1936 Auburn 852 Boattail Speedster. Fiberglass isn't an easy material to manipulate so the car's builder, Rick Dore Kustoms, took a different route on the exterior design.

The 1956 Jaguar XKSS was owned by actor and performance car aficionado Steve McQueen.

Familiar with the Porsche 911? Well, the 1964 Porsche 901 Coupe had to change its number from 901 to 911 after French car manufacturer Peugeot claimed to have patented a three-digit designation with a zero in the middle. Only 82 units of the 901 were

produced before the name change.

Motivated by Henry Ford II's unrelenting desire to beat Ferrari on the track, the 1967 Ford GT40 Mark III stands near, if not at, the pinnacle of collectible postwar American cars.

SONAX is the museum's official sponsor and caretaker of the museum's automotive assets. Santana has a long history of working with SONAX, a leader in high performance car care products and long associated with Formula 1 Racing.

Santana has participated in numerous high-profile detailing projects for the Petersen Museum since 2013, as well as being a member of the SONAX preservation team at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway's famous Vault.



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SCWA holds record-breaking convention and EXPO

The 2023 edition of the Southwest Car Wash Association Convention & EXPO, which took place February 22- 24, brought together over 2500 car washers and detailers from 45 different states, plus Mexico and Canada at the Fort Worth Convention Center, a press release reported.

According to SCWA President Ryan Darby, this was a record-breaking event for SCWA. As the first big car wash event of the year, the SCWA Convention & EXPO is a wonderful opportunity to bring the

greater car wash and detailing community together and provide for the attendees to learn and grow their operations.

The Convention was highlighted by two nationally recognized speakers. First Jose Costa, CEO of Magnolia Holdings, kicked off the popular CEO Forum on Wednesday giving his insights on leadership skills and how to be successful in life and business. Then on Thursday, attendees enjoyed the inspirational Keynote address from ESPN sportscaster Dick Vitale. Vitale of-

fered motivational stories and insights encouraging attendees to fill their lives with passion and pride.

The 2023 SCWA event included a record-breaking EXPO with more than 370 booths and over 100,000 square feet of eye-popping exhibits; the popular EXPO Quick Talks Stage; plus, premier education sessions including the Car Wash Academy. As SCWA Incoming President Mel Ulrich noted, “I am always amazed to see the excitement and enthusiasm of

all the attendees. So many people made comments to me like: ‘AWESOME Show’; ‘You really need to come to see how great this show is’; ‘Once again - first class as always’; and ‘Just what my team needed,’ the press release stated.

The SCWA has announced that next year’s Show & EXPO will take place February 28 – March 1, 2024, at the Fort Worth Convention Center.





Professional Detailing Products celebrates 90th anniversary

Professional Detailing Products (PDP) of Canton, Ohio, is proud to celebrate its 90th anniversary in 2023 with two exciting new projects. PDP is a leading manufacturer and distributor of over 200 top-quality detailing and car wash products, serving the global automotive industry, a press release reported.

PDP has been a trusted source of automotive detailing supplies for over 50 years. In 1983, the company began manufacturing the PDP line and has since grown to distribute thousands of other detailing and car wash products. Now, with its 90th anniversary, PDP is launching two new projects that will continue its legacy of innovation and success.

Firstly, PDP is introducing a brand-new, industry-leading software complete with a business portal, which will revolutionize how the company manages its products and interacts with customers. The software is designed to enhance PDP's already-leading customer service and make it easier for clients to order and manage their accounts.

In addition to the new software, PDP will unveil a completely redesigned website with a sleek, modern design that offers a seamless user experience. The website will be a valuable resource for professionals in the

automotive industry who are looking for top-quality detailing and car wash products.

These new projects follow the 2015 expansion of an additional 4000 square feet to the facility, to build a state-of-the-art National Training Center that included a 50-person classroom and 2 bays for hands-on training. Since then, the training center inspired other new builds, the same way their 4000 sq. ft. showroom dedicated to detailing had inspired more retail detailing showrooms across the country in the years before and continues to do so. PDP was appointed the first IDA-RTC, Recognized Training Center, by the International Detailing Association in 2018.

PDP's story began in 1933, when Max Rubin founded Ohio Auto Supply during the Great Depression, after emigrating from Russia with nothing but the shirt on his back and his strong spiritual beliefs. Phil Dickson joined his father-in-law in 1947 after serving overseas in WWII, and the company supplied auto parts to the local market for 75 years. Phil began distributing Pro Car Beauty in 1971, making Ohio Auto one of the first major distributors of professional detailing supplies in Ohio.

Michael Dickson joined his father in the business in 1980, and in 1983 they both

began the adventure that would become Professional Detailing Products. Beginning with top-notch formulas for 5 concentrated professional products, Ohio Auto became a local manufacturer, deepening their niche as a leading supplier of detailing products, and offering superior products at a huge savings - an unbeatable combination.

The father-and-son team didn't stop there. Bred from Phil's sound business practices and philosophies, Ohio Auto always went above and beyond in providing superior customer service, in addition to providing the highest standard of quality products. By listening to the customers and spending every day in the trenches and front lines, they tried to solve the customers' problems, and the Professional Detailing Products line grew as a result.

By consistently prioritizing customer needs, PDP has become a trusted name in the automotive detailing industry. The company's commitment to quality and innovation has allowed it to thrive for over 90 years, providing exceptional service and high-performance products to professionals across the country.



The History Channel launches Dirty Old Car series

“Across America, under layers of dust, mold and mud there are forgotten cars waiting years for someone to revisit their history and give them the one thing they need to get back on the road: a good bath.” That is how the History Channel describes its new series: Dirty Old Cars, which premiered on January 18.

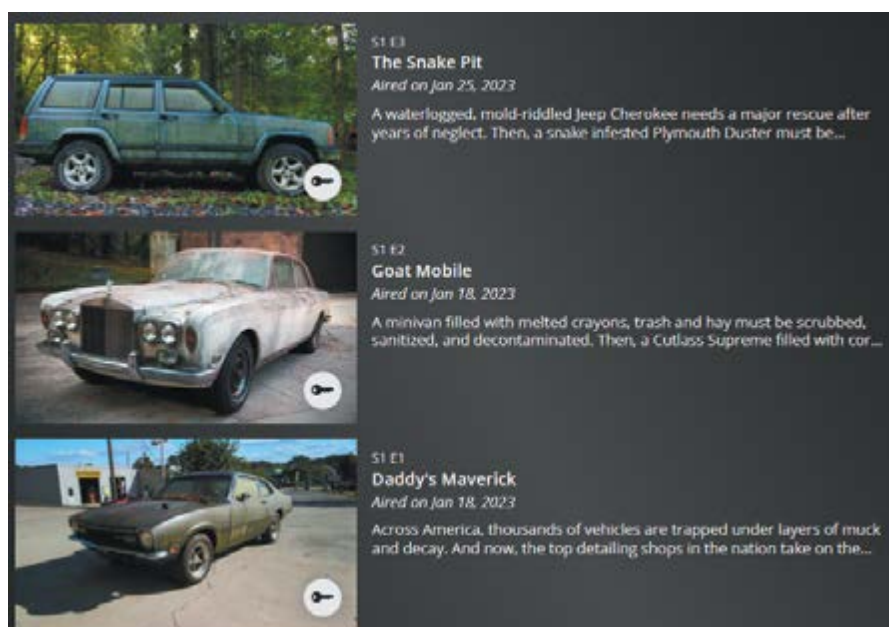
According to the Futon Critic, the series follows the passionate owners and staff of three different detailing shops: Unique Classic Cars in Mankato, Minnesota; Visual Perfection in Morganton, North Carolina; and Red's Detail Co. in Marietta, Georgia; as they hunt down dirty and often unrecognizable 4-wheeled gems.

To the right are a few descriptions of the



first three episodes.

Each 30-minute episode takes viewers on a journey from unveiling the vehicle to seeing how the detailers bring it back to life.



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Former criminal now details for NFL stars

Professional detailer Derrick Copes is now flourishing with an impressive client-base in and throughout Philadelphia, but that wasn't always the case. Now 50 years old, Copes once led a life full of crime.

"I was known for being in the streets, being in the dope game," he told WPIV.

He got arrested twice and was jailed for a total of 10 years for the two different offenses. However, it was during his second stint that he thought about a career doing something he loved: Detailing cars.

"I got into detailing as a way to relieve some stress," he said in the story.

"The first time I detailed a car, I cleaned my personal car. It took like five hours. And it was the best five hours of my life. I got lost in what I was doing. I wasn't worried about anything. I wasn't stressed. I wasn't depressed."

That was 21 years ago. Today, he details vehicles for members of the Philadelphia Eagles football team. "I've been doing their cars since Michael Vick, Donovan McNabb... Jonathan Gannon, the defensive coordinator," Copes said in the story. "I'm a diehard Eagles fan."

However, his favorite client is Eagles' defensive tackle Fletcher Cox. He is one of my best clients, Copes said in the story. "He's always motivating me to keep going, never give up."

Along with football celebrities, he also details cars belonging to the 76ers including Tyrese Maxey and James Harden.

The list is even longer for the Eagles, the story said.

Copes doesn't just relish in his own success, he also is paying it forward by helping other ex-felons. Copes gives them free advice and mentorship he founded the organization, "The Dopest Detailer," which provides support and includes a number of people who have also turned their lives around through the car detailing business.

"I'm trying to inspire people to go higher," Copes said in the story. "All of us were blessed with a God-given talent... Once you tap into what that talent is, you're unstoppable."

Auto detailing is a "science and an art," says Financial magazine



An article praising the auto detailing industry recently appeared in Financial Express, an Indian Financial publication.

"Car detailing seems like a mechanical term, but it's not. It is a marriage of art and science, necessitating a wide range of expertise and a considerable amount of time," wrote Jasmeet Singh Gulati in the January 1 article.

Gulati, who is the Managing Director of the Club of Automotive Detailers and Entrepreneurs (COADE), writes that a detailer should be held in higher regard, considering the fact that they add great value to a vehicle.

"Car detailing is not a phrase commonly associated with car mechanics and repair services, but it is a crucial and valuable service, nonetheless. Cars can have their shine restored with a good wash, buff, and wax job, all of which are included in the detailing process. An added bonus is an increase in the vehicle's resale value. The benefits of "car detailing," though not a technical term, are undeniable," Gulati adds.

The article also encourages people to hire professionally trained detailers, instead of doing it yourself.

"Car detailing is an intricate art and science requiring an immense degree of aptitude, understanding, and proficiency to attain the finest results. Although the underlying procedures and techniques of car detailing are fairly straightforward, it takes a qualified and experienced technician to deliver a professional and immaculate finish."

Former reality star gets his own detailing show on AppleTV+

Chaz Lawry, who currently stars on the reality game show The Circle, is now starring on his own show on AppleTV+. Known as "Shampoo Papi" to his multitude of Instagram and TikTok followers, he has become a viral sensation thanks to his funny videos involving his mobile detailing business.

According to a recent Bustle.com article, Chaz currently services areas in and around Los Angeles. After gaining follow-

ers on social media, he turned his business into an independent streaming series on Apple TV and iTunes. Apple describes his series, Shampoo Papi Mobile Detailing, as follows: Comical car detailer Shampoo Papi brings his bold, loud, and witty personality to the lives of people in need of a car detail.

Papi is also featured in season 5 of the Netflix show, The Circle, which launched on December 28, 2023. "Status and strategy collide in this social experiment and competition show where online players flirt, befriend and catfish their way toward \$100,000," is how Netflix describes the show. Players are picked off one by one and the last person remaining wins. And, if you want to know if Papi wins, do not read any further.

SPOILER ALERT

Papi makes it to the very end of the competition, but ends up as runner-up, out of 13 initial competitors.

Kleen-Rite continues to grow

Kleen-Rite Corp., the largest family-owned car wash distributor in the country, is proud to announce that they have acquired Laurel Metal Products, according to a March 10 press release.

Laurel Metal Products is a leading manufacturer of car wash vending machines. The company originated in 1959 as a sheet metal fabrication shop before developing

their first car wash vending machine in 1970. They specialize in drop-shelf vending, a method that reliably delivers products to customers at a highly successful rate.

Kleen-Rite — which is headquartered in Columbia, Pennsylvania — and Laurel Metal Products have been partners for several decades, so the acquisition makes sense for both parties. The move will streamline

the process of building and stocking Laurel products, create opportunities for Kleen-Rite to use their resources to expand the Laurel brand, and be an important part of Kleen-Rite’s overall strategy of continuous improvement in the dynamic and evolving car wash industry.

Laurel’s current management will stay in place, and all long-term employees will

be retained. Their products will continue to offer exceptional quality backed up by trustworthy customer service. This exciting acquisition will only serve to bolster the strength of both Kleen-Rite and the Laurel brand in the future.

ICA names new Vender Director

OPW Vehicle Wash Solutions, of Northville, Michigan, is pleased and proud to announce that Mark Tentis, the company’s Senior Vice President for Global Sales and Service, has been named as one of two new Vendor Directors on the 2023-24 Board of Directors of the International Carwash Association (ICA), according to a press release.

“For many years, the International Carwash Association has been a vital and stead-

fast advocate for the vehicle wash industry worldwide, so it is a great honor to be selected as a Vendor Director on the association’s Board of Directors,” Tentis said in the January 18 press release. “I can’t wait to start collaborating with my fellow board members as we work with a wide array of ICA members and their companies to find new and exciting ways to identify challenges, craft solutions and generally optimize per-

formance within the vehicle wash industry around the globe.”

Tentis, who has 22 years of experience as a professional in the vehicle wash market, was nominated for the Vendor Director position by his fellow colleagues in the industry. He will serve a two-year term, which began on January 1, 2023, as a Vendor Director.



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International Detailing Association announces 2023 inductees; launches consumer-focused website

DetailingNearby.com connects global consumers with local detailing professionals

The International Detailing Association (IDA), the leading global association for detailing industry professionals, is proud to announce the launch of its newest initiative: DetailingNearby.com, a website targeted toward consumers looking to find the services of an IDA detailing professional in their local area.

The website provides the largest dedicated worldwide directory of detailing professionals, including IDA Certified Detailers (CD). Additionally, the website is meant to act as the primary source of information for consumers looking to learn more about what professional detailing is, what detailing services are available to them, and why professional detailing is important to maintaining the value of their vehicles.

The goal of the website is to provide a place to connect consumers with local detailing professionals who have affirmed their dedication to a higher level of service through their IDA membership and certification. IDA members agree to follow a code of ethics, and Certified Detailers have had to pass a series of written exams, demonstrating their knowledge of detailing techniques, tools, terminology, and best practices.

It is the mission of the IDA to promote the value of professional detailing services and increase the global recognition of professional detailing as a trade. Professional detailing is often misunderstood and presumed to be synonymous with basic car washing. However, professional detailing requires much more skill and knowledge, and professional detailers often go through many hours of training to perfect their craft.

“We really want the new site to provide value to our members by leveraging the power of the IDA network,” said IDA Board Member Ian Rammelkamp, CD. “The long-term goal is for the site to build SEO clout and rank high in search engines, so that local customers who need detailing services can find our members and see that they are professionals who will take care of their prized possessions with care and integrity.”

With an expanding community of more than 2,100 members and Certified Detailers in 80 countries, the IDA’s DetailingNearby.com will be a resource for millions of consumers across the globe looking for an exceptional level of professional detailing services.

Introducing the IDA Hall of Fame Class of 2023

The following exceptional individuals comprise the IDA Hall of Fame Class of 2023. They were selected for their significant and lasting contributions to the professional detailing industry in the areas of Innovation, Advancement, Education, and Leadership. To learn more about these remarkable individuals and their achievements, visit the-ida.com/HallofFame.



DR. DAVID GHODOUSSI

Founder, Optimum Polymer Technologies



KEVIN HALEWOOD

Founder, Mobile Tech Expo & Sun King Publishing



RON KETCHAM

Director of International Sales and Technical Services, Prep Excellence Instructor, Automotive International Inc.



TADAO KODATE

Founder, JOYBOND Co., Ltd.



STEVE OKUN

Industry Consultant, SM Okun and Associates

About the IDA Hall of Fame:

Induction to the International Detailing Association (IDA) Hall of Fame is the highest honor that can be bestowed upon a member of the Detailing Industry by the IDA. Nominations are voted upon annually, and those selected for induction will be installed each year at the IDA Annual Business Meeting. This Honor is presented to a detailing industry professional that has contributed significantly to the industry as an Inventor, Leader, Organizer, Builder, Educator or Promoter of the Industry or IDA. Their

efforts will be viewed as above and beyond their peers and will demonstrate an effort to advance the detailing industry. They must have been in the industry for no less than 15 years. There is no requirement of IDA Membership, as many may predate the IDA and their contributions can extend from the beginning of the industry to the current day. The IDA is now accepting nominations for the IDA Hall of Fame Class of 2024 through May 31, 2023.

The International Detailing Association (IDA) is the leading global association for professional detailing operators, suppliers, and consultants to the industry. The association is dedicated to promoting the value of professional detailing services, the recognition of professional detailing as a trade, and empowering detailing industry professionals at each stage in their career.

If you have any questions or are interested in learning more about the IDA Certification Program, visit the IDA website at the-ida.com/Certification or send an email to: info@the-ida.com.

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Bud Abraham is Founder and President Emeritus of DETAIL PLUS Car Appearance Systems, with more than 40 years of experience in the car care industry as a manufacturer, operator, distributor and consultant. He writes articles and gives seminars on the subject of auto detailing throughout the automotive industry. He can be reached at buda@detailplus.com.

By Bud Abraham, The Detail Doctor
buda@detailplus.com

There are many benefits that a full-line detail distributor can offer its customers.

While a detail business owner's relationship with their distributor may not make or break the business, a good connection can prove helpful in many ways, particularly when the detail business is just getting started. The key is developing a working relationship that will benefit both the operator and the distributor.

The detail business owner-distributor relationship can be one of the most "pivotal" factors in what the distributor can offer *beyond* providing chemicals, supplies and equipment.

I know that many of you are saying, "I don't need a distributor, they don't do anything for me" and, "I know more than they do." Well, you have answered your own objections, "don't do business with that distributor."

Keep in mind, a good distributor can be the eyes and ears to the detailing industry. They can be a sounding board and even an adviser, especially for new operators.

They should be able help you solve some sticky problems, especially when working with auto dealers. They should also be able to help you with marketing and promotions. They can even help you find good potential employees in the industry.

Whether this happens or not depends on how you develop your distributor relationship, but you have to remember that it is a two-way street.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN A DISTRIBUTOR

Before attempting to develop a relationship with a distributor, it's wise for an operator to seek out an established and respected company with a reputation for quality products and after-sale service.

Here are a list of questions you should ask before settling on a distributor:

Are they well established?

How long has the distributor been in business?

What line of chemicals and products do they represent?

What is their history of providing products and services?

Are they financially stable?

Ask other detailers, auto dealers with detail departments and car washes that offer detail services for recommendations. This is where being a member of the International Detailing Association (IDA) comes in handy. Most members will help you out.

Is the distributor a member of the IDA? This says a lot.

Ask for marketing information- can they provide information on demographics? Are they familiar with the competition in your area? Can they help you with a pricing strategy?

Do they offer financing? If you are looking for terms from the distributor realize that you must give them the majority, if not all, of your business. It is a two-way street, remember. Can they recommend a good banker to deal with? Or even an accountant or attorney?

Can they help with shop or truck/trailer layout?

Can they help with equipment recommendations based on your budget, store/mobile rig design and your operational goals?

Can they offer assistance in developing a new location or remodeling an existing one? Determine what services they can offer in this regard.

Do they understand the logistics of opening a new detail business? Can they help you with all the de-

tails that go into getting a new store up and running?

How well versed are they in detail business operations? Do they have operational knowledge on how a detail business operates and how changes may be implemented to improve operations?

Do they conduct detail seminars on all aspects of the business?

Do they host events designed to share pertinent information about industry best practices and the latest management and operation trends? Do they host events to display and demonstrate he newest equipment it's selling for the manufacturer?

Do they provide service after the sale? That is, do they continue to support the chemical products and equipment they represent well after the sale?

Do they service equipment in accordance with the manufacturer warranty?

Do they offer original manufacturer (OEM) parts?

Do they strive to look ahead at 'What's Next' - Do they continually track industry trends and influences? Do they offer opinions on what the future of the detail industry might be?

Once you have selected a distributor that might work for you, before making any decision about relationship building, ask for references, from local detail businesses, car dealers and car washes. A



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distributor confident of their company's skills and abilities will not hesitate to direct you to their customers.

And don't hesitate to reach out to other store owners in the area to see if they have had or do have any relationship with this company you have identified.

■ GET TO KNOW THE SALESPERSON ASSIGNED TO YOUR ACCOUNT

It's more than likely that a distributor will assign a representative to be your point of contact.

Become their friend, understand their needs. Relate to the individual as a person. This doesn't mean that when they drop in, you take them out for lunch or treat them to a ballgame... instead enjoy building a comraderies with them. Study the person, see what makes them tick,

understand their personal and business needs, and develop strategies that enable the two of you to be friends.

Like you, the distributor salesperson is an individual, unique in their own way of thinking and doing things.

This isn't always the easiest thing in the world — especially if you like the products they sell, but you aren't able to develop a good relationship with them. Remember, you are two different people. One of you might be a quiet, self-contained introvert and the other might be a booming extrovert. One might hate politics while the other might think arguing Democratic vs. Republican values is ok to talk about. But, as they say, the most divisive thing you can talk about is politics and religion.

Keep in mind there's an inverse relationship at work here. You both want to do business together, but one wants bottom prices and impeccable service while the other wants higher prices and less-ur-

gent service.

Should you find the distributor rep's personality off-putting and the prospect of friendship unlikely, find a way to get along.

You have got to learn to overcome these obstacles, find common ground, and make that the basis of a friendship. Remember, you both have one thing in common, you are two individuals trying to make a living, often with families to support and finding a way to compromise is the only way to make things work. Certainly, putting in some effort and being willing to compromise can be the basis for a good relationship and mutual respect.

Once the relationship is in place, keep the lines of communication open. Inform the salesperson about how you like to receive information and how often you would like them to contact you, whether it be by text, email, phone or in person. An engaged detail business owner draws on many sources of information in managing and operat-

ing their detail business, but none may be as important as their distributor. For far too long, as long as I have been working in the detail industry the detail business owner did not demand the assistance and services from their distributors that I describe in this article, so they never provided them. The detail business owner let the distributor "skate by" providing only chemicals and a few operational supplies. Times have changed and detail product distributors need to be pressed to provide the detail business owner the services mentioned here. If you don't find one that will, things won't change for you unless you initiate the change.

If I can help you answer any questions or concerns, feel free to reach me at: know: buda@detailplus.com or (503)-816-7304.



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Detailers to the Rescue!



April 2021 detail crew on the Squad 51 Preservation Project included from left, Prentice St. Clair, Richard Ambroze, Chris Woolman, and Renny Doyle.

Project 51: Preserving 70s Television's Iconic Vehicles

By Prentice St. Clair,
prentice@detailinprogress.com

"I can't *believe* I'm polishing *this* vehicle!" I said to myself repeatedly while removing micro-scratches from Rescue Squad 51.

It was routine for me as a child, virtually every Saturday night from 1972 through 1979, I watched my favorite television show, *Emergency!*, which depicted the heroics of Los Angeles County Fire Department (LACoF) Paramedics Roy DeSoto and John Gage as they responded "code 3" to various rescues in what would become the iconic symbol of the show—Rescue Squad 51. They were often followed by the other rig from the sta-

tion—Engine 51.

Back in those days, there was no "streaming", "watch-anytime-you-want", or even recordings like VHS or DVD options. Instead, one would keenly anticipate the upcoming show each week, and religiously plop their rear end down in front of the television several minutes before the show began.

Both of these vehicles have been housed for many years at the Los Angeles County Fire Museum (LACoFM) in Bellflower, California, attracting old and young fans of the show, which remains in syndication to this day. The LACoFM holds several pieces of apparatus, equipment, and memorabilia from this fourth largest United States fire jurisdiction that

serves several million people across 2,300 square miles of land that is not within the City of Los Angeles. LACoF celebrates its centennial this year.

"Central Dispatch" Puts Out a Call

In early 2020, the museum put out a request for sponsorships for various museum improvement projects, among them asking for detailing supplies to keep the museum pieces looking great. Richard Ambroze, CD-SV, of Guns and Hoses Detailing in Pomona, California (incidentally, a community serviced by LACoF), heard about this and said, "I have someone who you should speak with." Am-

broze connected the museum staff with Bob Phillips, CD-SV, RIT, the CEO of P&S Detailing Products in Hayward. Says Phillips, "this was an easy 'YES' for us!"

That sponsorship commitment led to an in-person consultation between Ambroze and the museum staff, who desired to improve and preserve the appearance of the Station 51 apparatus. The engine and rescue squad have been restored in years past, including full repainting. At a distance, they both looked pretty shiny, but as one approached, it became quickly apparent that the paint suffered from typical extensive micro-scratching from years of incorrect wipe-down procedures. Museum staff desired the equipment to look its absolute best in preparation for the



Chris Woolman completes final touch-up on the Squad.

planned upcoming celebration of the 50th anniversary of the show's debut in 1972.

Ambroze proposed bringing in a crew of detailing volunteers to completely rejuvenate the paint and apply ceramic coating protection to preserve the reconditioned paint surface. He determined that the Squad rejuvenation and protection would require several technicians and multiple days to complete. Dates were established, and the team was built. Fortunately, I caught wind of this project and gleefully raised my hand like Horshack, a character from another 70s TV hit, "Welcome Back, Kotter".

Squad 51 Preservation Team Responds, "KMG365"

In May of 2021, Richard and I descended upon LACoF Museum, along with Kyle Clark, CD-SV-MC; Renny Doyle, CD-SV, RIT; and Chris Woolman, CD-SV. Museum staff was kind

enough to remove equipment and grab bars from the service bed so that we could polish every surface completely. We worked two 10-hour days on the Squad, which required two steps of polishing, followed by the application of two layers of long-term ceramic coating, finishing with a spray-on/wipe-off topper.

Great care was taken during the entire process. The floor around the Squad was protected against polishing splatter with plastic sheeting. Sensitive trim parts on the truck were taped off. Extensive testing was performed on the paint, including depth measurements, to determine the safest and least aggressive approach to correcting the paint. Many areas required slow, steady polishing with 3" pads. And, of course, we took our time moving in, on, and around the Squad to ensure no accidents.

Even though I do this stuff for a living, it still surprises me how much better the paint surface looks after each step. The final result was stunning. It seemed like you could dive into the still pool of liquid

red paint that was the hood of the Squad. Considering Squad 51 will spend 99% of its life in the climate-controlled museum, and with regular wipe-down care using appropriate chemicals and technique, it will likely never need any protection applied ever again.

The Impact and Legacy of Emergency!

We all currently take for granted that calling 911 in a dire medical emergency will result in the dispatching of Paramedics. Yet, during the time of the debut of the TV show *Emergency!* in the early 70s, paramedicine was a brand-new concept that had gone through a period of intense criticism by the traditional hospital-based medical community.

In the late 1960s, it was widely reported that trauma patients treated by medical corpsmen on the battlefields of the Vietnam War were more likely to survive than domestic automobile accident trauma patients, who were simply thrown

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The crew holds up the reconditioned Engine 51 number plates before reinstalling. From left, Samantha Sweeden, Richmond Reyes, Richard Ambroze (kneeling), Prentice St. Clair, Oscar Hernandez, Lex Traner.

into an ambulance and whisked off to the hospital. During the same time period, Los Angeles cardiologist Walter S. Graf brought to light the need to establish a method to treat critical cardiac events in the field to reduce the then likelihood of death that the untreated critical cardiac

patient would typically encounter during the trip back to the hospital due to lack of immediate care.

One of Dr. Graf's patients happened to be well-respected LA County Board of Supervisors member Kenneth Hahn, who championed Graf's concept by in-

troducing a pilot program to train LA County firefighters as "Mobile Intensive Care Paramedics". This was a new and controversial concept met with resistance by the medical community. But the visionaries pushed on. An article by the LA County Fire Museum sums it up best:

"A change in state law was necessary to allow personnel other than doctors and nurses to render emergency medical care. Hahn recruited two state legislators who wrote the Wedworth-Townsend Paramedic Act of 1970, signed into law by Governor Ronald Reagan on July 15, 1970, **despite opposition from doctors, nurses, and attorneys**. Paramedic training began the next month at the Freeman Memorial Hospital under Graf's direction. It was the **first** nationally accredited paramedic training program in the United States."

TV producer Robert A. Cinader caught wind of this new concept of "paramedics" and, working with producer Jack Webb (*Dragnet*, *Adam-12*) created and wrote *Emergency!*, which debuted in January 1972. At that time—this is incredible compared to today—there were only 6 full-fledged paramedic units in the **entire United States**. And these were in only **three pilot** programs—Miami, Seattle, and Los Angeles. It wasn't even a normal thing yet.

The TV show was thus credited with introducing the concept of paramedicine to fire and medical leaders and the general public across the United States and the world. Moreover, many retired and senior first responders credit the show with sparking their early interest in emergency service careers. Not to mention the countless younger professionals who were



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In fact, at last August's 50th anniversary celebration of the show's debut, the Cerritos Center for the Performing Arts was sold out with adoring fans who enjoyed interviews and autograph sessions with original stars Kevin Tighe (Roy DeSoto) and Randolph Mantooth (John Gage). Outside the venue, Squad and Engine 51 were on display, having rolled "code 3" through the parking lot, to the cheers of the watching crowd.

Engine 51 is Added to the Response

Finishing up the preservation work on Squad 51, it was difficult to overlook the Engine, which needed similar work, to be done at some undetermined future date. Well, Ambroze stayed on it, and coordinating with our LACoF Museum liaison Gilbert Garcia, a retired LACoF dispatcher, we set a date in October of 2022 to work on the engine.



Samantha Sweeden and Lex Traner polish out the 1969 ambulance with Engine 51 in the background.

Knowing that it was a much bigger project, Ambroze assembled a team of eight people. The all-California-based team included: Kyle Clark, CD-SV-MC,

with Xtreme Detailing in Fontana; Oscar Hernandez, CD-SV, of Eight-O-Five Detail in Ventura; Anthony Marquez, CD-SV, with Detail Pros in the San Ga-

briel Valley; retired firefighter Samantha Sweeden, CD-SV, of Bella Vita Detailing from Sacramento; Richmond Reyes, CD-SV, of Soaperior Detail from Rowland Heights; Lex Traner, CD, of Detail in Progress, Inc. from San Diego; Chris Woolman, CD-SV, of Octane Detail in Reseda; as well as yours truly.

We were generously supplied by several sponsors. Microfiber towels were donated by Ian Remmelkamp, CD, of Autofiber; pads were donated by Richard Umbrell of Buff and Shine; and, of course, all the chemicals we needed were supplied by Bob Phillips, CD-SV, RIT, of P&S Detail Products. We all brought our own polishers, extension cords, and other ancillary equipment like stepladders.

Much of the equipment on the Engine — such as ladders, drafting hoses, and oxygen tanks — was pre-removed by museum staff before our arrival. Upon examination of the Engine, we decided to remove a few more trim pieces, notably the "51" placards from the side and front,

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to ensure thorough polishing and coating application. It felt like a special privilege to handle and protect the “51” plates, as they gave the engine its iconic identity.

Ambroze coordinated the entire project, including the setting up of a supply area with all the required polishing equipment, pads, towels, and chemicals neatly organized for the job. We also spent time covering the floors and moving other museum pieces out of the way of the project area. Finally, before starting, we looked over the Engine and strategized how to approach such a large vehicle.

We started by taking paint thickness measurements, which led to the conclusion that there was plenty of paint from prior repainting efforts. Next, we completed extensive testing to determine the correct combination of pad and chemical to remove the extensive micro-scratches from the paint surfaces. Once the final approach was agreed upon, the team was let loose on different sections of the Engine.

An Ambulance is Added to the Response

Since the early days of the LACoFD Paramedic Program, they have used a “treat only” model of rescue response, with hospital transport, if required, supplied by a separately contracted ambulance company. In the *Emergency!* television series, there were several ambulances used, including a 1969 Chevrolet Suburban painted white over yellow, which was completely restored and unveiled at the museum in January 2022.

Since we were going to be at the museum working on Engine 51 for a few days with a large crew, it only made sense to add protection to the ambulance. It was a relatively straightforward job, requiring some fine polishing to remove micro-scratches, followed by the application of two coats of a 5-year coating.

We also touched-up the Squad and added a topper ceramic coating, which brought it back to nearly perfect appearance.

What will the Next Call Entail?

True fans of the show will ask, “What about the original Crown Coach Company open-cab Engine 51???” which was used only in the first season. Well, the paintwork on this unit has never been fully restored. Also, there are areas, like the nose, that were purposely dulled down during show production to prevent excess light reflection during filming. The museum wishes to maintain its original appearance, so there’s not much paint correction that can be done, and we are still debating the importance of coating “ugly” paint, as this vehicle is not likely to be exposed to the outside elements like the other two.

Nonetheless, for those of us involved in these projects, the LACoF Museum has become a part of our lives. During the working days, we all had the opportunity to walk around the museum and enjoy the many historic pieces of firefighting apparatus. So many are in need of appearance

care, and I am sure we will be back to work on these, one-at-a-time.

Why Respond to the Call?

This is hard work, time-consuming, and requires the blocking out of several unpaid days. The reward is priceless, however. We have a lot of fun working as a team and sharing meals before, during and after each workday. Moreover, we can be proud of the fact that we are preserving history. And, certainly, there are some marketing benefits to being involved in such charity work. I encourage other detailers to find similar projects in their areas, and to stay ‘plugged’ into the industry for such opportunities that are created by others.

Prentice St. Clair, CD-SV, RIT is the President of Detail in Progress, Inc., a San Diego based automotive reconditioning training and consulting firm. He is a Founder’s Club and Hall of Fame member of the International Detailing Association. He can be reached at 619-701-1100 and prentice@detailinprogress.com.

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